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LASHBACK

erving the Past for the Future

Volume 47 **November 1997** **Number 4**

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WASHINGTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Washington County Historical Society
118 East Dickson Street, Fayetteville, AR 72701

Flashback is published quarterly in February, May, August and November. Send all material for publication to the editor at 118 East Dickson Street, Fayetteville, AR 72701. There is no payment for articles published in *Flashback*. The Editor retains the right to edit all submitted articles prior to publication.

Membership is invited of those interested in the preservation of Washington County's history. Dues are $15 for single memberships, $25 for family memberships—annually. Donations, tax deductible according to current law, are gratefully received any time for special projects. Members are mailed *Flashback* every quarter. Past issues cost $5 each, current year's issues, $4 each.

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Cover photo: Headquarters House Museum and home of WCHS at 118 East Dickson Steet in Fayetteville during summer of 1997. *Photographby Don Schaefer.*.

FLASHBACK

Preserving the Past for the Future

Volume 47 November 1997 Number 4

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FLASHBACK is published and mailed four times a year—the first week in February, May, August, and November. Articles for *Flashback* should be submitted 60 days before the publishing date of each issue. Acceptable articles will be published in the next available issue, provided there is space.

COPY to be printed in *Flashback* may be submitted in one of several ways: 1) furnished on computer disc, preferrably in WordPerfect for either Macintosh or a PC, 2) by e-mail to the editor at [dschaefe@comp.uark.edu] or [DES32@aol.com], or 3) cleanly typed copy that can be optically scanned. Text copy, photos, and artwork are all assembled on a computer. We welcome letters or e-mail messages that tell us of planned articles or inquire about Society activities.

Headquarters House
Needs Your Help

Since 1967 when the Washington County Historical Society acquired the property at 118 East Dickson, now known as Headquarters House, members of the Society have spent much time, money, and effort to preserve this important historic structure in Fayetteville.

Headquarters House is in good shape. It is well maintained, thanks to the W.C.H.S. members and many friends. However, to keep it that way, approximately $17,000 per year is needed. That is why the board of the Society has embarked on an ANNUAL FUND FOR HEADQUARTERS HOUSE—to see that sufficient funds are available to keep Headquarters House always available as a "window" for our children to see into the history of this county and northwest Arkansas.

Member fees for W.C.H.S. are adequate to fund the member services such as *FLASHBACK*, Flash*forward*, and other regular publications and privileges for members. The funds for member services have been separated from funds for maintaining our historic structures.

The Society earlier this year established an Endowment Fund with $30,000—most of which came from a bequest from the Lowell and Edith Chaney estate. Any funds raised from the ANNUAL FUND that exceed $17,000 will be placed in the W.C.H.S. Endowment Fund.

Come visit Headquarters House and see the beauty of the gardens and grounds surrounding the house. Typical of many volunteers who assist W.C.H.S. are Deanna Tannehill and the Master Gardeners of the Maple Hills Garden Club who have gone "beyond the call of duty." Those who have observed the grounds over the years, even when we had employed paid landscapers, say the gardens and grounds are the most beautiful ever. In spite of volunteer

efforts such as these and others, there are still the continuing expenses of insurance, utilities, interior and exterior maintenance, and long-term maintenance.

Constructed by Jonas Tebbetts in 1853, the house served as headquarters for whichever army occupied Fayetteville during the Civil War—thus the name Headquarters House. These army forces were headed by Gen. Alexander Asboth and Col. Larue Harrison for the Union and Gen. W. L. Cabell, Confederate.

The house was occupied by a number of families following that war. These included Charles Whiting Walker, lawyer son of Judge David Walker and the Charles Applebys. The house was purchased by P. R. Green, Fayetteville automobile dealer, in 1939.

Headquarters House is the number one historical attraction in Fayetteville and one of the most famous historic homes in Arkansas. Each year hundreds of school children experience a "living history" tour of Headquarters House and the Archiball Yell Law Office.

Your help to maintain this vital part of local history is needed in the ANNUAL FUND that is now underway. Please give this your kind consideration. ❖

THE CANE HILL MURDERS

by David R. Malone

Part I

The best known accounts of the murders of five members of the Wright family are reprinted in the *Flashback*. The murders occurred at Cane Hill, Arkansas, on the western frontier of Arkansas in 1839. The awful event and the frontier justice of the era make sensational reading.

Walter Lemke, former editor of *Flashback*, indicated that most later accounts of the murders were based on two sources: (1) Alfred Arrington's version published in his book *The Regulators of the South and Southwest* published in 1847, major portions of which were reprinted in the *Flashback*, and (2) James Neal's original manuscript which was written years after the event and which was reprinted in volume six, number one of *Flashback*. In addition, the recollection of eighty-six year old J.F. Bates, an 8-year-old-boy at the time of the murders, which appeared in the publications of the Arkansas Historical Association, Volume IV, 1917, was also reprinted in the *Flashback*. Lemke described the Bates account as the "only eye witness account of that horrible scene that I have been able to discover."

A wealth of additional contemporary newspaper sources are also available and are offered here to present a more complete understanding of the formative years of Washington County.

The Murders

The first published notice of the murders (which occurred on June 15, 1839) appeared in the *Arkansas Gazette* on June 26, 1839:

Murder by wholesale - Early on the night of the 15th, inst., the family of Mr. William Wright, residing in Washington county, near the Cherokee line, were disturbed by several men demanding admission. Mr. Wright answered the summons, was immediately dragged from the door, and murdered by stabbing. His wife, being alarmed by his cries, immediately seized one of the children, and fled the house about a mile distant, where she gave the alarm, stating the persons who attacked the house were Indians. In the morning a party preceeded to the place of Mr. Wright, and found the house burnt to the ground, and Mr. Wright and four children killed. Two others of the children had been severely wounded, and one escaped unhurt, who were found concealed on the bank of a creek near the premises.

Mr. Wright having been known to have recently received a considerable sum of money, suspicion rested on several white men living near the line, who were arrested and examined in relation to the bloody transaction. Most of them were discharged, nothing appearing to warrant their detention. Two, named Taylor Barnes and Archibald Dillingham, have been retained in custody, circumstances strongly warranting the suspicion that they were concerned in the murder - a piece of the vest of one of them having been found in the yard of Mr. Wright, and the feet of the horses of both corresponding with tracks found near the spot. The money which is supposed to have been the object of the attack, had been deposited by Mr. Wright with his brother, and thus were the murderers foiled in their design, after the commission of a crime which humanity shudders at.

By the next week the *Gazette* was correcting some of the rumors surrounding the murders:

Washington county murder. - We learn by a gentleman from Washington county that the two men

named Dillingham and Barnes, who had been examined in relation to the late outrageous murder committed in that county, have been discharged, nothing appearing to warrant their detention, they have entirely cleared themselves of every suspicion of having participated in it. Nothing had occurred to lead to the discovery of the perpetrators.

The first detailed description of the murders was published in the *Batesville News* on July 4, 1839:

> Murder of a very atrocious character was committed in Washington county on the night of the 15th ultimo. The particulars of which are given in the following extract from a letter written by a distinguished gentleman of Washington county to a friend in this place.
>
> "The most horrible murder every perpetrated in a [C]hristian country, was committed last Saturday night at Cane Hill, on Mr. William Wright and 4 of his children. Mrs. Wright states that soon after retiring to bed she heard the sound of horsemen approaching the house. Her temidity [sic] suggested the apprehension that they might be hostile Indians. She awoke her husband and communicated her fears, and both arose. Mrs. Wright through a crack by the door discovered three men walk up to the door. One asked if they could stay all night. Mr. Wright replied yes, and opened the door. The robbers at that moment, seized, and stabbed him to death. Mrs. Wright fled out the back door. A daughter (perhaps the oldest) rushed out by the assassins while yet butchering her father. Mr. Wright being dispatched the fiends commenced slaughtering his defenseless children. They struck out the brains of a little infant on the floor, and ran their bowie knives through the tender bodies of three other children as they reposed in the embraces of sweet sleep. The fourth a little boy of some ten or twelve years, with a long, heavy blade, the deamons

[sic] at a blow separated the crown from the mass of his head - striking him into insensibility, but not into death as they supposed. Fortunately two other children sleeping in an other apartment were not discovered, also little Morris escaped their observation. This little child of the tender age of 6 or 7 years only, had been placed at the back side of a trunnel [sic] bed; thus hiding him from the eyes of the murderers. Little Morris was awake and with the wisdom of mature years lay in breathless stillness, eyeing from beneath the folds of the bed furniture, the strange deeds of murder, rob[b]ery and arson."

"From this intelligent child, we learned that after every eye beneath this ill fated roof as they supposed, had been closed in death, and every tongue silenced forever; the robbers proceeding to plunder the house of all the money, set it on fire and galloped off. Little Morris after satisfying himself that the murderers were gone moved from his hiding place, and commenced with astonishing intelligence to rescue all from the ruins of the rapidly advancing flames. He run and awoke his little sisters and hurried them out of the burning dwelling - returned and found his wounded brother returned to consciousness. His feeble strength being unequal to this weight, Morris threw his arms around the shoulders of this almost murdered brother, and tenderly drew him beyond the influence of the increasing fire - returned, caught up the infant, but finding it lifeless, gently laid it down a few paces from the door, on the breast of the father. He then assayed to return for the lifeless bodies of the others, but the fire now having wrapped the door in flames, forbid his entrance. Seeing his angel like purpose thwarted, he, with his little sisters and brother, sought such a resting place as a house less [houseless] farm and clear sky afforded. The daughter that escaped at the outset, took refuge in a rye field. Mrs. Wright made her way some mile and a half, or two

miles, bare-footed, and in her night dress, to her friends."

The *Arkansas Gazette* reprinted the account from the Batesville News, with spelling and typographical corrections, on July 17, 1839.

An eyewitness account of the scene, containing additional information, has also been preserved. It was published in the July 31, 1839, edition of the *Arkansas Gazette*, in a letter from Charles M. McClellan, neighbor of the Wrights, who viewed the scene the next morning. The facts in McClellan's letter were attested by Lewis Evans, the first sheriff of Washington County.

The account given by McClellan is as follows:

"Cane Hill, Ark., July 15th, 1839

Friend Cole - I discover in your paper of the — June, a notice of the murder of Wm. C. Wright and part of his family, on Cane Hill, together with some of the proceedings had relative to the apprehension and discharge of several persons supposed to be the murderers, and that Archibald Dillingham and Taylor Barnes were retained in custody, under strong suspicions of guilt.

I discover that your information is incorrect, and that, in justice to Mr. Dillingham, the circumstances should be correctly stated, which are substantially as follows:

On the night of the 15th of June, three men rode up to the house of Mr. Wright, about 9 o'clock, (which is quite an out of the way place) hitched their horses at the usual place of tying horses, dismounted, opened the yard gate some ten steps from the house and advanced to the door, and hailed in a low tone of voice, and asked to stay all night. Mr. Wright and family had just gone to bed, when Mrs. Wright heard the horse's feet approaching; they seemed to approach as such a rapid gate that she became alarmed, rose from

the bed, and looked out at a crack, spoke to Mr. Wright and told him to get up that they were Indians. The house being a log cabin, with two rooms and a log partition, with two front doors, the men stood close to one of the doors when they hailed, and Mrs. Wright looking through the crack from the other room, when Mr. Wright opened the door where the men stood. Mrs. Wright distinctly saw them all three grab him at the moment he opened the door, at which time they commenced the murders, whereupon Mrs. Wright dropped her infant on the bed in the room she was in, and made her escape at the door of the same room, whilst these villians [sic] were engaged with Mr. Wright at the other door, she made her escape to a neighbor's house (my house) about one mile distant, barefooted, in her night clothes, over a tremendous rocky, brushy route, up a large hill, through the woods, fearing to take the road, with the belief that they were [I]ndians going about massacreing [sic] and burning. Her eldest daughter, a girl about 13 or 14 years of age, made here escape at the same door Mr. Wright was murdered at, between two of the murderers, and lay in a field of rye all night close to the house. The balance of the family were all asleep, consisting of eight other children, four of whom including the infant, were murdered, - say two daughters, one son, and the infant; the girls, one about 11 and other 9, and the boy about 4 years of age; and one son about 12 years of age, badly wounded by having his head hacked in several places with a tomahawk or a bowie knife, his skull broke, so that about one spoonfull [sic] of his brains oozed out of the wound. The murderers then robbed and set fire to the house, which caused two small boys, about 5 and 7 years of age, (who were asleep in a trundle bed not pulled out from under the large bed,) to wake. These two boys commenced hunting and trying to wake the family. They found the largest girl that was murdered, pulled her out of

the house and found that she was dead. They then found the infant, carried it to the door, found it was dead and dropped it. They then went to the bed where the boy slept who was so badly wounded, pulled him out, and in doing so found a little girl, two or three years old, sleeping on his bosom, not hurt, took it out also. They then went back and commenced pulling the smallest girl that was murdered; they found that she was dead, and the house was falling in so that they were obliged to abandon her. In the morning the neighborhood assembled at the place, found the house, and every thing it had contained, burnt to ashes, (except a small bandbox which was lying in the yard, and which Mr. W. had used for the purpose of holding his money in,), Mr. W, the girl those boys dragged out, and the infant lying close to where the house stood, with all their clothes burnt off, and them into a crisp. Some of the bones were to be seen of the little girl and boy who were burnt in the house.

Such was the scene, the most shocking I ever witnessed, and the most shocking ever witnessed in a civilized country in time of peace; in fact the scene beggars description. Those two little heroes, the boy that was so wounded, and the little girl, were found hid under the bank of a small creek which runs close by the premises. Horse tracks were found near the place and followed some distance, but no discovery could be made thereby, only that they had traveled in a certain direction. The impression on that night that the Indians had broken out, and were murdering and burning; but on the next morning the impression was, and is such yet, that Mr. W. was murdered for his money by some persons who knew all about the circumstance of his having traded a great deal, in the produce way, in the Cherokee nation, whereby he realized a considerable amount of money, which money he fortunately deposited, some one, two, or three days previous to his murder, with his brother for safe keep-

ing, and that they had done it in this barbarous manner in order to induce the citizens to think it was Indians.

The citizens made search round for some two or three days, when suspicion fell upon several persons whom the citizens took into custody, appointed a committee, sent for witnesses, examined the several cases before them, and turned all those persons loose, not having suffficient testimony to convict any of them; suspicion still resting upon some of them yet. In taking up some of those suspicious persons, Mr. Archibald Dillingham was found in company, and he also was detained in custody during the investigation, thinking that perhaps his testimony might be of some advantage in the matter pending.

In justice to Mr. Dillingham and his friends, I have no hesitancy in saying that he never was suspicioned [sic] for being either one of the murderers or accessory thereto. The circumstances of his being taken into custody, was something like Tray being caught in Tiger's company.

Yours respectfully,

CHARLES M. McCLELLAN.

I, L. Evans, have no hesitancy in saying, I believe the foregoing to be substantially correct.

L. EVANS

The Examination of Witnesses

John Richmond, James Barnes and Jackson Turner were executed at Cane Hill on July 29, 1839. The "official" summary of the testimony of the witnesses was supplied to the *Arkansas Gazette* by the committee of citizens who hung them. The summary was reprinted in full in the *Gazette* edition of September 18, 1839:

For the *Arkansas Gazette*

THE CANE HILL MURDER

The circumstances and proof which led to the exe-

cution of John Richmond, James Barnes, and Jackson Turner, at Cane Hill on the 29th of July, 1839.

By reference to the *Arkansas Gazette* of the 15th July, the particulars of the murder of Wm. C. Wright and part of his family may be seen.

The unprecedented murder was committed on the night of 15th June, 1839. Mrs. Wright, who made her escape, stated she saw three men ride up, hitch their horses, and come up to the house. She described them.

On Sunday after the murder, some hundred persons assembled to assist in burying the dead and in searching for the murderers. The tracks of the horses were seen where they were hitched and for some distance in the direction of the Cherokee line. Several detachments of ten or twelve men each, continued to ride in different directions until Tuesday, but could make no discovery. It will be borne in mind, that James Barnes lived about six miles westward from Mr. Wright's and upon the Indian line: Turner and Bailey about 3 1/2 miles south of Barnes, upon the line; John Richmond about 4 or 5 miles north of Barnes, a little east of the line; and John Nicholson some 7 or 8 miles west of Richmond, and in the Cherokee Nation.

Suspicion rested upon said Barnes and brother, in part, from the circumstances hereinafter given, it was determined on by the citizens of Cane Hill to arrest Barnes, and his brother Taylor S., John, Alexander, and Asbury Richmond; James Barnes having started to Little Rock before the command reached his place for the purpose of arresting him, on Wednesday, the 19th of June, he was followed, overtaken and brought back. On returning, in Vineyard Township, a man was seen some distance ahead meeting them. So soon as he saw the company, or a part, he left the road. The place was such that he could not get away without leaving his horse. The company surrounded him, and caught him in a hollow some distance from the road. They

found his name to be Bailey, who had for some time previous lived with said Jackson Turner. From a letter which he had with him, written for his friends in Tennessee, and which he tried to destroy, they learned that he was on his way to Texas.

Several days were taken up in the investigation of the matter. Suspicion in the meantime rested upon Jackson Turner, James Barnes, and Bailey, but all were disposed to believe the Richmonds clear. John Richmond proved himself at home at bed time, by his brother Asbury and Washington Harmon, his brother-in-law and wife, all of whom lay in the same house. Alexander Richmond proved himself to be 12 or 14 miles from Cane Hill that night. James Barnes proved that he was at home at supper, by Messrs. Wafford and McCrackin, and that he went to bed at home, by Jacob O'Bryant and sister, same night.

Bailey proved himself clear by J. Turner, Turner and himself having been together at a ball play same-day, and passing Barnes' grocery about sunset. It therefore became necessary for Turner to prove himself clear, which he did by his mother and niece, Miss Hunter, Turner testified that they got home about one hour in the night - that his mother was gone to bed - that they passed Allison's mill about dark, saw some wagoners encamped near the mill race. Proved by his brother-in-law, Wm. Hunter that himself and Bailey returned before they went to sleep. Bailey stated that they passed that mill about dark, saw Allison, did not speak to him.

Witness William Ballard, one of the wagoners, stated that several wagons and teams were camped on the road near the mill race on the night of the murder. He saw no one ride about or after dark, until a late hour in the night, say about 12 or 1 o'clock, when three persons rode by very fast. Witness was satisfied no person could have passed on horse without his knowledge; that the road is such at that place that no

person passing would be necessarily compelled to pass close by the wagons; that he had been interrupted by drunken Indians; and did not sleep until a very late hour. Consequently all were released; but suspicion still rested on some of them.

Some 10 or 15 days after the aforesaid men were released, Asbury Richmond, at his brother John's (where he sometimes staid) being intoxicated became angry with his brothers John and Alexander Richmond, and perhaps his brother-in-law, Washington Harmon, all of whom were there. He continued to be angry for some hours; went to Harnage's in the meantime, who lives some sixty or eighty steps when John Richmond's returned again. It was now night. He was heard by Mr. Harnage, his wife, son, daughter, and Mr. Day, Harnage's clerk, to alert his brother, or both of them, to several acts of their stealing; and that they had stolen horses, etc.; and that they had disgraced him; and said "You d—d rascal, helped murder that family on Cane Hill, and I was taken up and disgraced as a consequence of it, etc. No reply was made so that it could be known to which of his brothers he had reference. This being communicated secretly to those who were engaged in trying to ferret out the guilty in the aforesaid murder, Asbury Richmond was taken into custody, and not suffered to speak to any person. A committee of eight persons of Cane Hill and adjoining townships were selected for the purpose of interrogating him; whereupon examining him, he recollected well what transpired that night when he was intoxicated; disclosed all the facts relative to said murder; said that it was his brother John he had reference to; that John, his brother, said James Barnes, and Bailey once proposed to him to get into the arrangement to get money; that Barnes said he knew where there were lots of it; that he declined to go into the arrangement; that they warned him at the peril of his life, to say nothing about it. He fur-

ther stated, his brother John was at home on Saturday evening, 15th June. He did not see him after dark, but heard him driving off some cattle about dark. He further stated that he was indebted to Hardage, who had taken a judgment against him, and he had not the means to pay it. On Sunday after the murder, his brother John took him out in a little patch near the house and said he would shortly let him have some money to pay that debt; at the same time and place told him (Asbury) that himself, Bailey, and Jackson Turner did that business on Cane Hill and that there were others concerned.

Upon the testimony of this witness, John Richmond, James Barnes, and Jackson Turner were arrested and kept under guard. Prisoner John Richmond was brought before the committee, the charges read to him, who denied knowing anything about the matter, at the same called upon God to come down and burn his head with a thunder bolt if he was guilty, and requested that his brother-in-law Washington Harmon and wife to be sent for to testify of his innocence.

Witness Harriet Greene, who lived ten miles south of Cane Hill and fifteen miles from said John Richmond's and was judged to have become confidant of witness Asbury Richmond, from his frequent visits there, was sent for, with instruction for no person to change words with her until she should depose before the committee, or someone appointed to interrogate her, as to what witness Asbury Richmond had said to her (in confidence) about the murder.

Here it is worthy of remark, that she had not known at that time, any of the particulars related by witness Asbury Richmond before the committee.

She deposed before Justice Thompson, that some short time after the murder of that family, she thinks on Monday night after, said Asbury was at her mother's when he told her that his brother John, Jackson

Turner, and Bailey, did the murder, and there were others concerned. She was required to say nothing about it. She was then taken to Cane Hill, and deposed before the committee to the satisfaction of all, as to her correctness, corroborating her first statement before Justice Thompson.

Witness Asbury Richmond acknowledged to have made the communication to this witness.

Prisoner James Barnes, brought before the committee. Nathaniel Wofford, one of his witnesses, stated that Barnes was about the grocery until about sunset. Witness went to supper about dark; James Barnes was then there. Himself and McCrackin went to the grocery and staid all night; left at the house James and Taylor S. Barnes, Muchlorath, Jacob O'Bryant, and Patsey his sister, after staying about an hour.

Witness Jacob O'Bryan stated that he was about the grocery Friday and Saturday before the murder. James Barnes was there on Saturday all day. He staid at the house of Barnes all night. Barnes was there when they went to bed and got up in the morning.

Witness Patsey O'Bryant corroborates the statement of her brother. Witnesses Taylor S. Barnes and Muchlorath corroborate likewise.

Witness Mrs. Wright state that James Barnes had been at their house after bacon twice, which he carried away on horseback. He was there on one occasion, and was asked by her why he did not get bacon of the wagons as they passed down into the Nation, rather than pack it. Barnes replied he did not see the wagon or know when it passed down. Mr. Wright, being in the field was called in to weigh the bacon for Mr. Barnes. When he came to the house, and learning that Mr. Barnes wanted bacon, Mr. Wright inquired of him also why he did not get it as the wagons passed down a few days previous. He made the same reply to Mr. Wright as to his wife. Witness further states that on return of Mr. Shelly, one of the teamsters, he was

asked if he did not call at Barnes' grocery as the wagons went down, who said he did stop and talk with Mr. Barnes. Witness asked Mr. Wright what could have induced Mr. Barnes to have told such a lie. Witness further states, that on Friday before the murder Barnes was at their house after bacon, the money was put in a small band box that was on top of a book shelf. Barnes was inquisitive with Mr. Wright as to his business and sales of his bacon, whether it had been profitable or not. The wagons were then gone with the last loads of bacon.

Witness Shelly stated that he did call and talk with Barnes on going down with a load at the time alluded to. Reminded Barnes of circumstances to convince him; to which Barnes replied it might be so.

Witness C. M. McClellan states that on Sunday morning after the murder, a small band box was found in the yard close by one of the little girls who was murdered. This was the only thing belonging to the house that escaped the flames.

Witness Wm. Hunter, brother-in-law to Jackson Turner states that on the night of the murder some little time after himself and wife had gone to bed, Jackson Turner and Bailey came home from the ball play. Turner set in the door and talked while Bailey put up his horse.

Witness Mrs. Hunter corroborates the same statement, and thinks it not more than half an hour after night when they came.

Witness Mrs. Turner, (mother of Jackson Turner) and Miss Hunter, (daughter of Wm. Hunter and niece of said Turner) states that Jackson Turner and Bailey came home from the ball play on the night of the murder, about half an hour after night, that they were preparing supper; they went to bed there and up next morning.

Witness Ambrose Harnage stated he observed John Richmond having changed his clothes on Satur-

day evening of the murder, and on Sunday morning following, as early as sunrise or before, he observed that Richmond had changed his clothes again, and put on those he wore during the week.

Prisoner John Richmond, being brought before the committee again and apprised of the proof that existed against him, still said he was innocent. He was ordered to be taken away. About this time he made an effort to escape, was shot at, but missed; became entangled with a chain that was attached to his leg; he fell, was caught without injury, and was again brought before the committee, and said he would tell the truth about it, and made the following statement:

That on Friday, the 14th June, 1839, he went to John Cole's (his neighbor) to get meal. On return, saw Jack Nicholson, who spoke to him about the chance of getting money, or going into the arrangement to rob, etc. They talked a short time, appointed to meet at a little pond surrounded with brush, up the valley, a short distance from said Richmond's that evening.

Nicholson was going to Sylvia Post Office to get his newspapers. Said he would cross the branch near Pelham's, go up to the place appointed. They met according to promise, talked about the matter; Nicholson knew the chance was good to get the money. They agreed to meet the next night as soon as they could at an old house on the road from James Little's to Matthews' old place. That he went to bed, as the balance of the family did, in the same house with his wife, his brother-in-law Washington Harmon and his wife, and his brother Asbury Richmond, and his nephew, Wm. Richmond. He made an excuse, and did not lie down in the same bed with his wife. As soon as he thought they were all asleep, he slipped out, had a gray horse belonging to Alexander Richmond ready, put on an old coat, mounted his horse, went speedily to the place described to meet at. When he got there he found Jack Nicholson, James Barnes, a man by the

name of Bailey, Jackson Turner, and one other man whose name he can't call, thinks they called him Jack or Jim. They agreed to suffer death before they would ever divulge; and each man was to prepare his own witnesses, to clear him if suspicioned. James Barnes stated no person was at home except Wright, his wife and children, the two young men who helped them being absent with their wagons. Barnes knew the money was there, and they could find it in a band box; he was there on the evening before after bacon.

They all set out for the place where the robbery was to be committed, went directly through the woods, leaving Funkhouser's farm on their left, proceeding down a deep hollow where the hills appeared to come in close on each side. At the mouth of this hollow they concluded to divide the company. He, the said Richmond, was nominated by Nicholson to do the burning, stating that he was tall enough to take a buzard off his roost, and would be first rate to set fire to the roof of the houses. He, the said Richmond, was to do the burning, and Turner and Bailey were to do the balance. Turner was well acquainted with the places of hitching horses. They rode up, hitched their horses, went into the yard, walked up to the door side and side, Bailey or Turner hailed, Mr. Wright went to the door, asked what was wanting; the return was to stay all night. Mr. Wright said they could do so, making some remark about the unusual hour of the night for calling, at that time opening the door. They all slipt in, at the same time, Bailey plunged his knife into Wright. A general butchering now ensued. He, the said Richmond, further recollects a woman escaped out at the door by Wright as they were murdering him. He made but little moan, groaned once or twice; thinks Bailey discharged his pistol at Wright. He, the said Richmond, can't state much of the particulars while the murder and robbery went on, as he was engaged in firing the house. That he fired the smoke

house also. The money consisted of specie and paper; it was found in a trunk and small band box. They took the money among them, mounted their horses. As they went on Bailey remarked that he believed he had killed two or three of the d——d children with the cock of his pistol. They arrived at the place where they had left the balance of the company. It was concluded on to give the whole of the money to Nichol-son, to be by him kept until the matter became settled, when an equal division would take place. He, the said Richmond, further states that he has seen Nicholson once since, learned from him that there was a little upwards of $400 of the money which was to have been counted by Nicholson and divided in future. After the money was thus disposed of, they proceeded down the road. When they came to the road leading from Allison's mill to Harnage's he left the company and made his way home as speedily as possible. He, the said Richmond, further states that the object was to do the murder in Indian style. That the reason offered by Nicholson and Barnes for not going forward was, that they had been there and might be known.

Prisoner James Barnes brought before the committee, Richmond present, whose confessions was rehearsed to him. He denied knowing anything about the matter, and stated that he was very well able to prove himself to have been at home on that night by the host of witnesses. To which Richmond replied, "So was I able to prove myself at home that night, and Barnes you know it is the truth; come out and own it like a man; why deny it any longer. Do not die with a lie in your mouth. You know we swore allegiance to each other, and to die before we would ever disclose the matter. I thought I could face these men and deny it. I did so, and on yesterday called on God to come down and burn my head with a thunderbolt if I was guilty, it all would not die. I believe that God, before whom we must shortly appear, had an influence in causing me to

tell the truth about it. Barnes, you know we deserve death, and that of the worst woman die; hanging is too good for us." Turner was likewise brought forward and the confession of Richmond made known to him, who stood out and denied having had any agency in the matter, showing no signs of contrition of heart.

Richmond stated that there were many bad men who were unsuspected, and on the day of his execution upon the scaffold he would tell more; and naked if he could have half an hour allowed him at that time for the purpose of giving a full detail of things, which, he said, would astonish the people of Washington county. He asked if he could have an interview with his wife and child, which was granted him. Afterwards he showed no disposition to make further disclosures. On Monday, the day he was executed, at the hour of 10 o'clock A.M., he was waited upon by two of the committee, who found him engaged in fervent prayer. They asked him if he was fully aware of his hour of dissolution. He said he was. They asked him if the people might still expect further disclosures from him on the stand. He said he thought not, as his moments were few he wanted to put in his time in praying; that he did not know if what he could relate would be of much service to the people.

He was then asked if he would hear the statement read which embraced his confession made on Saturday before. He said he would in a few minutes. He then asked for them to be read. They were read slowly. He was then asked if there were any alterations which he wished made, either by adding to, or striking out. He said not; that it contained substantially the facts, and that no material alteration could be made; that they were his dying words. He was then asked if he would be sworn upon the subject, to which he readily consented, and subscribed his name thereto. The following are the names of the men who set upon the committee of investigation, to-wit:

Samuel Harris	Lewis Evans
James Coulter	B.H. Pierson
Levi Richards	Garvan Dana
Robert Bedford	Aaron Parks
John R. Pyeatt	James Buchanan
John D. Moore	John Latta
William Oliver	John McClellan
James Hamilton	Andrew Buchanan
Leander Buchanan	T.C. Wilson
Robert Parks	Wm. D. Crawford
James Mitchell	James Crawford, Sen.
Samuel Carnaham	John Tilley, Sen.
Henry E. Campbell	Thomas W. Norwood
Thomas Tiner	Richard Bean
William Crawford	Robert Buchanan
M. W. McClellan	Mark Bean
Isaac P. Spencer	William Munkres
Samuel Marrs	John Campbell

About a week after the executions, the committee was again called into session at the request of Levi Richards and Charles M. McClellan, owner of the cabin where Mrs. Wright fled the night of the murders. These depositions demonstrate the use of multiple hearsay and the community unrest which continued to occupy the regulating company even after the hangings. Again, the action of the committee is reported in the *Arkansas Gazette*, this time on September 25, 1839:

For the *Arkansas Gazette*

The Committee of the Cane Hills Regulating company, at the request of Messers. Levi Richards, Charles M. McClellan, and Gen. John Campbell, assembled at Hillsborough, on Cane Hill, on the 8th day of August,1839, to investigate and determine a case, in which the said Richards and McClellan charged the said Campbell with having slandered them, by publishing that the said Richards and McClellan had been

concerned in, or accessory to, the murder of Wm. C. Wright and children. Members present: Samuel Harris, Andrew Buchanan, Mark Bean, Robert Bedford, James Buchanan, Leander Buchanan, Jesse M. Blair, James Coulter, Lewis Collins, Samuel Carnahan, Henry E. Campbell, Coleman Cox, William Crawford, William D. Crawford, James Crawford, Jr., John S. Edmiston, N.D. Hanks, James Hamilton, B.G. Hill, John Latta, John D. Moore, James Mitchell, John R. Pyeatte, Guilford Pylant, Maurice Wright, Robert Parks, B.H. Pierson, and Aaron Park. Samuel Harris was Chairman, and William Crawford was chosen Secretary, pro tem.

The following testimony was introduced:

(The article on "The Cane Hill Murders" will conclude with **Part II** in the next issue of *Flashback.* In Part II the testimony for both the plaintiffs and defendants will be given and the author will offer a conclusion to the this famous murder "case.") ❖

New Washington County Book Published

From W.C.H.S. member Nancy Maxwell, <nmaxwell@flash.net>: I'm pleased to inform the membership that my second book, *Washington County, Arkansas, Miscellaneous Record Book, 1841-1879,* has been published by the Heritage Books, Inc. The book is a transcription of the Washington County Miscellaneous Record Book. It includes apprenticeships, deeds of gift, slave sales and manu- missions, some family birth records, incorporations of religious and fraternal organizations, promissory notes, and registries of local millers. A surname index is included. The book is invaluable for obtaining genealogical information that may not be found elsewhere. The price of the book is $23.00 and it may be ordered from Heritage Books, Inc., 1540-E Pointer Ridge Place, Bowie, MD 20716. ❖

FORTY YEARS AGO - From the November 1957 issue of *FLASHBACK*, Volume VII, No. 6

REPORT of AN EPIDEMIC of SMALLPOX in WASHINGTON COUNTY

by the late Frank B. Young, M.D.

(Editor's note: An article in the July 1957 lssue of *FLASHBACK* on the history of the Oak Grove Church, written by Thomas Rothrock, reported that this church held no meetings in February 1914 because of a smallpox epidemic in the community. The article was of special interest to Mrs. Daisy Young Holcomb of Fayetteville who remembered the epidemic because she helped her brother, Dr. Frank B. Young, vaccinate hundreds of residents of the Springdale-Elm Springs area during this epidemic. Mrs. Holcomb has given us permission to publish the report of Dr. Young to the state medical society. - WJL)

The epidemics of smallpox that have been so prevalent throughout the United States have been, as a rule, of such a mild type as to cause both the profession and the public to consider smallpox a trivial disease. The epidemic that I purpose to report is one of the hemorrhagic and purpuric type which existed in Elm Springs Township, Washington County, Arkansas, during January and February of 1914.

Mr. C.O.White and family left Tampico, Old Mexico, on Dec. 30, 1913, landed at Port Arthur on the night of Jan. 6 and reached Bert Carson's home in Elm Springs Township on Jan. 8. On Jan. 5 a boy 2 1/2 years old became sick, but his disease was not diagnosed as smallpox until Jan. 10, before which time a number of people had been exposed to the disease.

The epidemic spread from this start, finally causing the sickness of 26 people. Of these, ten died. Of the ten that died, but one had ever been vaccinated, and he had been vaccinated in 1864. Of the vaccinated people who were in almost constant contact with the trouble were Mr. and Mrs. White, two White children, Mr. and Mrs. Wilse Phillips. Of these, Mr. and Mrs. White and one White child did not contract the disease at all. One White child had the disease in a very mild form not necessitating going to bed at all. Mr. and Mrs. Phillips each had the disease in a very mild form and were hardly sick at all. Mr. and Mrs. Phillips were vaccinated in 1864, and no attempt to vaccinate had been made since, until after this outbreak.

The White family was vaccinated in 1910. A number of other persons who had been vaccinated came in contact with the disease before its nature was known, and did not contract it. Alex Downum, who had severe attack of smallpox in the year 1864, at the age of two years, was employed as a nurse in the Phillips home and contracted the disease in a moderately severe form. Other persons, numbering in all about 20, who had the disease previously, were employed as nurses and none of them contracted the disease.

One child of Brown's was vaccinated after being exposed to the smallpox; the vaccination taking successfully, the child did not have the smallpox. Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Brown had been vaccinated previously; the vaccinations at this time in both cases were unsuccessful. Both contracted the disease; Mr. Brown died after an illness of about five days. Mrs. Brown recovered after a tedious convalescence extending over more than four months. Mrs. Brown is the only unvaccinated adult who contracted the disease and recovered. No unvaccinated person over 20 years of age recovered, with the excep-

tion of Mrs. Brown.

The interesting points in this epidemic are its high percentage of mortality, 90 per cent of all unvaccinated adults, the recovery of all children afflicted, and the very evident effect that age had on the prognosis of the disease. The younger the child, invariably, the milder the attack. One nursing child at Mr. White's had a very mild attack The attacks ranged in severity from this in the unvaccinated to the death of some of the adults within 48 hours of the onset of the trouble. A successful recent vaccination in all cases was an absolute protection. In the cases of Mr. and Mrs. Phillips, a vaccination 50 years old exercised more protective influence than had a severe attack of smallpox in the same year in the case of Alex Downum.

Another point of interest in this epidemic lies in the fact that it came not from the cases that have been epidemic throughout the United States for the last decade, but was imported with all its virulence from Old Mexico. The literature on the subject of smallpox goes to say that the disease seldom changes its type; that a mild case seldom assumes a severe form, nor does a severe case have a very well-marked tendency to become mild. Nearly all the severe epidemics that have ocurred in recent years in the United States have come from Mexico. The epidemic I am reporting is probably the most severe of any that has occurred in recent years in the United States. At least, I have not been able to secure data on any as severe from the Public Health Service.

(Editor's note: The remainder of Dr. Young's paper has to do with the diagnosis of smallpox. The talk was followed by a discussion, which closes with these final remarks by Dr. Young:)

We have had a great deal of smallpox in northwest Arkansas, and I have been associated with its manage-

ment for the last 8 or 10 years. But the ordinary epidemics that we have had have been negligible – that is, the results have been negligible. At the time this epidemic broke out, I was sick, and I did not have any part in the management at the beginning of the trouble. But after a week or so, I was called into these cases and I found that there were two doctors in whose territory these cases were occurring, both of whom had been practicing as long as I had, and, neither of them had ever been vaccinated.

Voice: Didn't they get vaccinated?

Dr. Young: They got vaccinated. In my office we vaccinated between 800 and 1,000 people during this time of this epidemic. It was not any trouble to get folks to be vaccinated at that time. Vaccination is an absolute preventative of smallpox. Mr. and Mrs. Wilse Phillips were vaccinated in 1864, and Alex Downum had smallpox the same year. The smallpox that Alex Downum had was of such severe type that it killed his father, mother, uncle and brother in that epidemic. Alex Downum was assigned as a nurse in the Wilse Phillips house and contracted the disease at the same time, and was sick at the same time as were Mr. and Mrs. Wilse Phillips, and he had to go to bed and was really sick for three or four days.

Also, Forty Year Ago in Nov. 1957 ***Flashback, page 26:***

It Doesn't Have To Be Ancient To Be History

So long as students and alumni of the University of Arkansas thrill to "Alma Mater", the name of the composer of that hymn, the late Henry D. Tovey, will always be remembered. In other words, Professor Tovey is assured of a place in the history of the University, of the community, and wherever Razorbacks are assembled.

It comes as something of a surprise to learn – from

Belden Wigglesworth of Washington, D.C. – that the U.S. government has placed Henry Tovey's name in its records, in quite a different field than music. Mr. Wiggles-worth, a former Fayetteville resident, was doing some research in the NationaI Archives. There was a book on the table at which he was sitting. It was Vol. XVIII of U.S. Life Saving Reports, 1912-1914. He flipped the pages at random but stopped when he saw on the printed page, "Henry Tovey of Fayetteville, Arkansas." He sends us a resume of what he read in the government report:

Henry D. Tovey and three others on a bathing raft at Holland, Michigan, were carried out by undertow into open lake. Raft capsized in rough water several hundred yards off shore. His three companions fought their way through heavy surf but Tovey was helpless.

Crew members of the Life Saving Station of Holland, Michigan, tried to swim out to him but could not make it. A boat was finally launched and reached Tovey 100 yards off shore. Tovey was floating on the surface, face down, motionless. They worked over him in the boat and again on shore. First signs of life came 10 or 12 minutes after reaching shore.

Patient moaned after lungs were freed of water. Two hypodermic injections were made: one of strychnine and one of brandy, and the patient struggled feebly. In two days the patient was recovered sufficiently to leave the Holland Life Saving Station, walking unassisted to his hotel. He later wrote a letter of thanks.

(Life Saving Service Reports, Vol. XVIII, p. 28, 1912-1914, National Archives, Washington, D.C.)

Nov. 1957 *Flashback, page 48*:

A historical theme (Golden Anniversary) featured the annual dinner meeting (Oct.8) of the Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce. Highlight of the program was

the showing of slides of old and new Fayetteville, with narration and background music. The pictures,collected and shown by Wes Gordon, CofC secretary, date back to 1870 and include portraits of all former presidents of the C of C. Many of the ex-presidents were present at the dinner, including 15 who have been long-time members of our WCHS. Prolonged applause greeted the introduction of W.S. Campbell and F. S. Root, both of whom have previously been cited by our Society as "Distinguished Citizens". A surprise was the presentation to your editor of a plaque on which is engraved: "Appreciation to Walter J. Lemke for Exceptional Service to Our Community in the Field of History." My thanks to the Chamber of Commerce for this unexpected and flattering recognition.

Nov. 1957 *Flashback, page 48*:

This issue of *FLASHBACK* is the sixth and last for this year. It is the largest [50 pages] that we have yet published. It contains Washington County material that has never been published in print. Our publication is outstanding among county historical publications, both in quantity and quality of its contents. If that be immodest, make the most of it. We see enough county historical publications, from Wisconsin to North Carolina, to know that Washington County, Arkansas ranks near the top. Our Society can point to many accomplishments, all of them made possible by the folks whose names appear as members . . . History is a part of the state's second biggest industry — Tourism. Will you be one of the 500 WCHS members for 1958?

[Yes, we can be proud of the *FLASHBACK* started by Professor Walter J. Lemke and edited by him for many years. Back issues contain valuable local history and genealogical material just waiting for you at the library!] ❖

Memories of Taylor's Old Stable & Byrnside's Tavern

by Vicki Rounsavall

The following from Fayetteville newspapers give several accounts of the days when hotels, taverns, and livery stables were essential for area travelers.

The following article is from the June 28, 1894 *Fayetteville Weekly Democrat* and written by James H. Van Hoose (who signed his many articles "J.H.V.H.")

Fayetteville. June 19, 1894. The people of this city were delighted on yesterday morning to see Isaac Taylor commencing the work of tearing down the old rickety stable which has for years been an "eye sore" to everybody in our town, who had any pride in decent appearances around our public square. Mrs. Taylor has let the contract to Albert Byrnes to build a two story stone and brick building on that corner lot to be used as a livery barn, but if the people's wishes could govern in the matter that corner lot would not again be made the home of the horse and mule, but be used as a site on which to build a fine hotel or bank building. But Mrs. Taylor says she has to look out for her own interest, and a livery barn will pay best and that is what she is working for.

But everybody is glad to see that old stable removed and are willing to accept anything in its stead. The oldest inhabitant of Fayetteville stood leaning upon his cane yesterday watching the men tearing off the board roof, and he too seemed glad to see it go down although to him there would seem less reason to be glad, than for others to rejoice as he had no real estate in town to be benefited by this improvement, but I learned from Mr. Taylor that he was expecting a job of stone work when

the foundation was begun.

This oldest citizen is Champ Taylor, a former slave of James Byrnside, the grandfather of Mrs. Taylor. Champ was born on Christmas Day, 1829, and was six months old when his master brought him to Fayetteville in June 1830, just sixty four years ago, where he has been ever since. No man or woman can claim a longer citizenship in this town than Uncle Champ Taylor, and he ought to have a job of work on the new building which is to be erected on the same lot where he spent his childhood days and his young manhood.

His master, James Byrnside, bought that corner lot at the commissioner's sale in 1834, and paid $350 for it. In 1836 he built a double log house on it for a hotel and for many years it was the leading hotel in town. Byrnside's hotel was to Fayetteville what Rogers hotel was to Ft. Smith or the Anthony House was to Little Rock.

It was headquarters for politicians and men of renown when visiting Fayetteville. When I first came to make this town my home and for ten years after, it was the most popular resort of any corner in town and the best kept hotel in Northwest Arkansas. The hotel was surrounded on the east and south, by a row of handsome shade trees and their cooling shade was a great comfort to the guests of the hotel, as well as the town loafers who congregated there on a summer's afternoon to discuss the leading topics of the day, especially politics. When our town was honored by a visit from any of the distinguished men of those early days, arrangements were made to entertain them at the Byrnside House. In the summer of 1852, General Albert Pike, of Little Rock came to town to make a railroad speech and stopped at the Byrnside House. That was the first railroad speech ever delivered in Fayetteville. In the summer of 1860 quite a flutter of excitement was produced by the

announcement that Vice-President John C. Breckenridge (at that time the democratic candidate for president) would pass through here on the overland stage coach on his way to California, in company with Senator Latham, of California, on Saturday July 14. The news was quickly spread all over the county and great preparations were made to give him a rousing reception, as he was regarded as one of the greatest men then living, especially by the democrats of this county and town. I didn't think so, and I was not alone in my estimation of great men. I was not going to vote for him but expected to vote for John Bell, of Tennessee, and was in the company of those old and honored citizens, Honorable David Walker, Dr. Pollard, Hugh F. Thomason, Robert W. Mecklin, Mark Rean, Bill Quesenbury, J.D. Walker, Z.M. Pettigrew and other good men, in whose good judgment and patriotism I have confidence. But I, in common with all others of our town, was anxious to see him and assist in paying honor to our Vice-President, and felt that it was something for Fayetteville to feel proud of. The day at last arrived and our town was soon full of people of all political parties who had come to town to see a live Vice-President of the United States. Arrangements had been made to entertain our distinguished guests at the Byrnside Hotel, and a committee, consisting of six gentlemen, had been appointed by a meeting previously held in the courthouse to receive the distinguished gentlemen, viz.: Vice-President Breckenridge and Senator Latham, of California, and escort them to the courthouse, where they were expected to greet the people.

In those days we had no telegraph with the outside world, and the quickest news we got was by the Butterfield Overland Mail, which passed through our town three times a week, and we did not know until the stage arrived that day that we were to be so sadly disap-

pointed. Several hundred persons were assembled on the streets and a large flag was floating from the flag staff on the cupola of the courthouse and smaller flags from all the business houses around the public square, the anvil batteries were arranged at the corners of the court square and everything in readiness to make a big noise and give to our distinguished visitors a good impression of Arkansas. The well-known "toot toot" of Charley Butterfield's stage horn was heard at the upper end of College Avenue and in a few minutes we saw the big concord coach drawn by four large fine steeds with Charley on the box with lines and whip in hand, turning the corner at the east end of Center Street. The anvil batteries "maned" by Jim and Dave Stone and Perry Deane, were touched off and quickly recharged and fired again and again, while the many hundreds of enthusiastic people shouted and waved their hats, the ladies waving their handkerchiefs and parasols at the supposed great man who was leaning out of the window of the stagecoach, returning salutation, by waving his hand at the excited multitude, as the foam covered steeds of the gallant Charley Butterfield dashed through the crowd on the public square, and were reined up in front of the Byrnside Hotel (or tavern as called in those days). A fine looking man was seen to alight from the coach and the excited multitude again shouted a glad welcome to the distinguished statesman who was honoring Arkansas by this accidental visit to its "Athens." The committee of reception, headed by Col. A.M. Wilson, proceeded at once to the hotel to escort the great Democratic standard bearer of the nation to the courthouse, to be introduced to the people who were anxious to hear a speech from the next President of the United States. This committee, as well as I now remember, was composed of the following citizens: Col. A.M. Wilson, Dr. C.W. Deane,

Maj. W.D. Reagan, Judge David Walker, William Quesenbury and the writer of this sketch. The three last named were put on the committee to represent the Bell and Leverett party. The three first gentlemen were zealous supporters of the Breckenridge Democracy and as the distinguished visitor was then the Vice-President of the United States was thought proper that he should be received by a committee composed of all the political parties of our county. Douglass and Lincoln were also candidates for the same office for which Breckenridge was a candidate but neither one of them had friends enough in this town or county to furnish a representative on this committee of reception. When our committee reached the tavern we were greatly disappointed to learn from Senator Lathom that Vice President Breckenridge had changed his programe and decided not to accompany him to California, via the great overland state route across the plains.

Senator Latham very kindly consented to represent the Vice-President and make a short speech to our people whose expectations had been raised so high and who would be greatly disappointed if they had to go home without hearing some great man of national reputation. We escorted him to the courthouse which was soon densely packed by the people, both men and women and for one hour he discussed the great issues of the day, proving himself to be an orator as well as a politician, well-informed on matters of government. The speaker was frequently interrupted by cheering during his remarks and at the conclusion of his address he received abundant assurances of their satisfaction and delight which made the California statesman feel proud of his success. He was again escorted back to the tavern where an elegant dinner was served, which he seemed greatly to relish, after which he again entertained the Butter-

field palace car to which had been attached a fresh locomotive; consisting of four large fine horses, with the indomitable Charley again at his post of honor, ready to pull the throttle wide open and give him another gallant ride through the streets of the "Athens of Arkansas," the memory of which he has no doubt carried with him to his latest day.

All "aboard" was shouted in regular "Gene Fisher" style and the California statesman shook the hands of as many as could get in reach of him and again entered his "special car" which was to carry him over the uninhabited places that then lay between this country and the far offshores of the Pacific. With a full head of steam up the conductor's tin whistle was sounded and at the loud sharp command "git" the fiery steeds dashed down Block Street to the corner of Center, down which to the westward they flew at rapid speed while the hundreds of enthusiastic democrats shouted themselves hoarse and the loud peals of Jim Stone's and Perry Deane's anvil artillery shook the ground and were echoed back from the hills surrounding our little city of long ago. As evidence of the fact that we had succeeded in making a favorable impression on our distinguished visitor from the golden shore, I will conclude the account by quoting his last parting words. Just as the stage coach was rounding the street corner where the Bank of Fayetteville is now located, the people wildly cheering and the loud mouthed cannon (the anvils) booming, the California Democrat who felt himself so highly honored, thrust his head and shoulders out the window, waving his plug hat he shouted aloud "Hip hip hurrah for Hell and Arkansas." These were the last words of the distinguished Californian. The foregoing is one of the many incidents of the past which is brought to mind by the tearing away of the old building which has for many

years occupied the once popular corner of the public square of our city. Many other memories cluster around that corner one of which will never cease to thrill me with pleasure indescribable, viz.: In August 1855, I was boarding at the tavern, which was then kept by Col. William Adams, a brother of Governor Samuel Adams, and an uncle of the late John D. Adams of Little Rock and on the evening of the 9th of August 1855, several of my young friends took supper with me at the tavern for the last time as I was on that night to be married and change my place of eating. At 7 o'clock my old friend, Capt. John W. Chew (sexton of St. Paul's Episcopal Church) rang loud and long the deep toned and musical bell which hung in the cupola of their neat little church building which stood on the corner where John P. Wood's residence now stands, and the carriage in which I was to ride to the church was drawn up in front of that tavern and I there bade a parting adieu to my young bachelor friends and advised them to go "do likewise."

A fearful storm cloud was rising in the west and the rain was soon pouring down in torrents, but not a deluge sufficient to check the proceedings at the church, as the house was crowded to its utmost capacity, in spite of wind, rain, vivid lightning and loud rattled thunders my old friend Bill Cush in his description of the wedding said:

> The night was dark and fearful the thunders made racket
> When James Van Hoose was married by the Reverend Mr. Hacket
> But storms nor clouds nor goblins grim
> Could fight the valiant heart of Jim
> Arrayed in Simpson's neatest trim with bosom starched and collar prim
> Love, lovey, love ye burned not dim within the joyous soul of Jim.

The great majority of our present inhabitants have no personal knowledge of the old tavern but they have of the old dilapidated stable and rejoice with me and all others who desire to see our town look respectable when strangers visit us, to see the present work of demolition going on. We feel sure its successor will be a great improvement on the old one. Maybe in the coming time there will be a magnificent six story marble front building occupying that same corner lot, used for hotel purposes and some little boy, now playing on our streets may live to see it and will remember the old ugly stable now being removed. So mote it be. J.H.V.H.

Where were Taylor's Stable and Byrnside's Tavern located? This ad in the April 6, 1860 edition of the *Fayetteville Arkansian* tells us.

BYRNSIDE HOUSE:
FAYETTEVILLE—ARKANSAS
ISAAC TAYLOR,.....Proprietor.

THIS well known house, formerly occupied by Mr. Onstott, and situated on the South west corner of the Public Square, is now under the supervision of Isaac Taylor: It having been thoroughly repaired and refurnished , is now open and the proprietor will spare no effort nor expense on his part, to accommodate all who may favor him with a call. The table will be furnished with the best the country affords; and the stables will be well supplied with provider, and good and faithful hostlers and servants to wait on all. Call and see for yourselves.
April 2, 1860

The following article in the March 16, 1860 *Fayetteville Arkansian* under the heading of "HOTELS" gives another opinion of Fayetteville's "finest" facility:

Rev. J. E. Spencer a very intelligent and accomplished gentleman, editor of "The Theocrat," published at Harmony Springs, Benton county, Ark, recently paid our promising young city a visit, in company with his lady. The following were some of the pointed and forcible impressions made upon his mind.

The merchants and professional men of Fayetteville are truly gentlemen of a high order. Fayetteville, howev-

er, lacks one thing, and that is a good hotel. She has really no hotel at all. There is a pile of lumber there, *with a hole in it*, where people crawl in and stay for the night; but our ideas of a hotel would not allow us to give it the title. We remained there the other night, ourself and companion, taking two meals each, and the landlord charged us *each three dollars*; besides we were obliged to labor hard from ten o'clock until four in the morning, (keeping our room lighted all night,) to defend our person against the attacks of certain ravenous insects which dwell in and about the aforesaid *hole* and which delight to take their evening meal from the blood of humans. Our labor and loss of blood was worth three dollars more, making in all $6—a pretty strong bill for a back woodsman like us.

Dr. Spencer never uttered a greater truism than when he said Fayetteville lacked a good hotel. And his description of his lodgings contains as much sober truth as cheerful humor. The want of a good hotel has been a subject of regret to us, and has been a serious draw back upon the city. Travelers and visitors are invariably pleased with Fayetteville, but have never tarried longer than was absolutely necessary, on account of the absence of good accommodations. We are happy to inform Dr. Spencer, however, that a new era is dawning upon this city in this particular. Mr. Taylor has taken possession of the old Washington House, and we have no doubt that he will make it a pleasant place of entertainment.

A new hotel has also been established in the brick building opposite the Christian chapel; it is called the City Hotel and will be under the supervision of Mr. Dar Neal, whose energy, attention, and good taste will assuredly attract corresponding patronage, and a favorable notice from the public. We had the pleasure of dining at this new institution and heartily recommend it as

creditable to the place,

The veteran landlord, Mr. Onstott is now holding forth on the south side of the public square.

These houses, together with a neat cottage hotel kept by Robt. Hodge, make four houses of entertainment which are now in operation in this place, and we are confident that the competition between them will insure a decided improvement in this line. We hope and believe Dr. Spencer will not have to pass another sleepless night in Fayetteville.

From the April 13, 1960 *Fayetteville Arkansian*, we get another glimpse into the hotel proprietorship of Fayetteville, perhaps the origin of the Byrnside Hotel's name. Here is the obituary of Mrs. Margaret Byrnside:

Mrs. Margaret Byrnside, one of the oldest citizens of this place, died at her residence on Saturday the 7th last.

She was consort of James Byrnside who died here many years ago. After his death she took charge of the hotel at the south corner of the square, now occupied by I. Taylor Esq, and it is well known that as a Landlady she never had a superior in this town.

Becoming advanced in years, and wearied with the active duties that required her attention, she retired from the hotel to her late residence, and lived in quiet and seclusion to the end of her days.

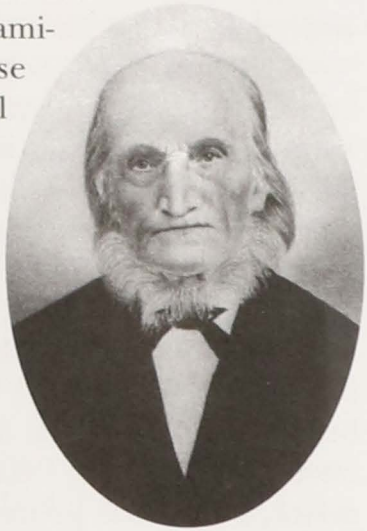
Mrs. B. possessed many excellent traits; she was kind and affectionate to friends.— Her tongue uttered no scandal against her neighbors. Her loss will be regretted by her numerous friends and relatives who are scattered in many sections of the west. Her remains were buried, beside her husband's, at the Mount Comfort cemetery on Sunday evening. The funeral services, at her residence, before the procession left for the cemetery, were performed by President Baxter of Arkansas College.

Mrs. B. was, we believe, a native of Tenn., passed her girlhood in Indiana, and at the time of her death was in her seventy-first year. She had been a resident of this place since 1828. ❖

[Editor's note: For more about the early hotels in Fayetteville, there is an excellent article on pages 1-8 of the February 1974 issue of *Flashback*—also taken from the memories of James H. Van Hoose on the early days of Fayetteville. There are also numerous references to the Brynside House or Byrnside Tavern in other issues: May 1953, page 16; Aug. 1968, page 19; Aug. 1970, page 51; Aug. 1976, page 9; and May 1977, pages 30, 34. (It was sometimes incorrectly spelled Burnside.) Check with the *Flashback* index of past issues in the Fayetteville Public Library.]

James Hayden Van Hoose

Here is a brief biography of James Hayden Van Hoose, the prolific writer in early Fayetteville newspapers who is quoted so much in *Flashback*. For more information on this family's history, see the "Van Hoose Family Collection" in the Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville.



John Van Hoose

James Hayden Van Hoose, the son of John and Lydia (Lewis) Van Hoose, was born on January 8, 1830 in Johnson County, Kentucky. In May 1839, the Van Hoose family left their home on the Big Sandy (near Paintsville) and traveled

by flatboat to Cincinnati, Ohio. From Cincinnati they traveled by steamboat to Montgomery's Point on the White River (Napoleon, Desha Co., Arkansas), Little Rock, and Van Buren in Arkansas. At Van Buren, they loaded their belongings into wagons pulled by oxen and began their journey over the Boston Mountains to the middle fork of the White River in Washington County.

James H. Van Hoose

Both Van Hoose photos are from the Van Hoose Family Collection, 1945-1967, in Special Collection Division, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville.

In 1850, James Hayden Van Hoose enrolled at Ozark Institute, a college for young men founded by Robert Mecklin. Two years later, he left his home at Hazel Valley on the middle fork of White River and moved to Fayetteville where he was employed as a clerk in a store owned by James Sutton. James Van Hoose married his first wife, Melinda McIlroy, a daughter of William McIlroy in 1855. After Melinda Van Hoose's death, he married Martha Wallace Skelton, a daughter of William and Mary "Polly" (Gordon) Skelton. Among his many accomplishments, James H. Van Hoose was a partner in the mercantile and banking business with his father-in-law, William McIlroy, for over thirty years. He was also a Master Mason of Washington Lodge #1, and the Mayor of Fayetteville during the 1880's. He died May 6, 1899, and is buried in Evergreen Cemetery. ❖

Incidents in the Battle of Prairie Grove

by L. T. Sanders, Plain Dealing, La.

(This account of action during the Civil War is taken from page 16 of Vol. XXIV of *Confederate Veteran*, dated January 1916.)

There were Federal troops under General Blount at Cane Hill, Washington County, Ark., and General Herron was on his way by Fayetteville to reenforce him. Gen. Tom Hindman, in command of the Confederate forces then near Fort Smith, becoming aware of the movements of these troops, decided to attack them in detail. Sending General Frost with some Missouri troops to attack General Blount and, if possible, hold him at Cane Hill, he, with the rest of the army, by forced march placed himself on the main road between General Blount and General Herron, our advance surprising a Federal cavalry regiment just as they were feeding their horses about daylight. Here we turned to the right, marching toward Fayetteville, reaching Prairie Grove about twelve o'clock, where we encountered the enemy, and about one o'clock the battle opened and raged fiercely until night.

General Frost failed to hold General Blount at Cane Hill; so about three or four o'clock General Blount appeared in our rear, closely followed by General Frost. General Blount signaled General Herron and was answered, and General Blount immediately moved and took position on General Herron's right, where he was soon confronted by General Frost, and a very hard-fought battle raged for about two hours.

Sometime after dark the enemy seemed to be destroying their surplus baggage by burning and from all appearances were retreating. With General Blount was

the 8th Missouri United States Cavalry. This regiment was out scouting when General Blount retreated from Cane Hill, and when they returned they found their command gone; so they moved along after General Frost and somehow got into our lines at about midnight. Discovering the fix he was in, and it being very dark, the commander, simply by prudence and daring, passed on through without being molested or his presence being known, our advance pickets thinking, of course, that it was a Confederate regiment going to the front. On our way home after the surrender we met this regiment not far from Little Rock and they joked us pleasantly about the affair.

On the battle field that day we saw a horse with one hind foot shot off below the fetlock, and the next morning we saw that horse about twelve-miles away. We too had retreated during the latter part of the night, not having supplies sufficient to warrant us in following up the victory. We saw some pretty hard service in the Trans-Mississippi Department. ❖

A complete index of past issues of *Flashback* has just been brought up to date through the year 1996. It is available on disk and in printed form in the Grace Keith Genealogical Collection of the Fayetteville Public Library. This index, originally assembled in 1992 and brought up to date by Pat Donat, is an excellent tool for using this invaluable source of local history and genealogical information on Washington County. Back issues of nearly all editions of *Flashback* are available. See inside front cover for details. ❖

Letters Received

Dear *Flashback* Editor:

In the last Washington County Historical Society's publication, Professor Lemke is quoted as saying he had made assignments on five interesting subjects to assure wider coverage for the next (second) *Flashback.* His assignments and pleas for more articles apparently succeeded since one of the 1958 editions consisted of approximately eighteen mimeographed pages.

In that year a dozen members of the Washington County Historical Society met with Professor Lemke to prepare our next historical magazine. We met in Hill Hall where Professor Lemke had already spread stacks of mimeographed sheets over two large tables. Each member marched around the tables picking up sheets until they formed the next *Flashbacks.* We walked around as many times as there were members to receive the publications. After collating the sheets, we stapled them together, and left them for Mr. Lemke to mail.

Perhaps some of you still have some of these old mimeographed and hand stapled *Flashback.* If you have one, please think of it as a tribute to a great teacher and writer.

Lois Lawson Morris
1601 West 3rd Street
Russellville, AR 72801
Member of WCHS since 1957

Dear *Flashback* Editor:

I was very interested in the "Granny Fraley" article in the February 1996 Flashback and in particular the legend of the outlaw "Texas Jack" who was the nephew of my father's first wife. My father, George Marion Anderson, married Rhoda Prater.

Your article has more information about Nathaniel's father [Nathaniel Reed was "Texas Jack"] than I had ever known before. Rhoda was the daughter of Elijah and Jamima Prater and my father was the executer of Elijah's estate when he died. My half brother, Wm. Anderson, took Texas Jack's body to the Breashears Cemetery for burial. He and "Texas Jack" were cousins.

I remember seeing "Texas Jack" several times when he came to our house. The last time was in the 30's at Fayetteville. My father had been very ill and we did not think he knew anything. Texas Jack said not to tell him who he was, he wanted to see if he would know him. Well, he did know him, called him by his name as soon as he went in. "Texas Jack" lived to be 80 or more.

I have three letters Texas Jack wrote from prison.

Your magazine furnishes much valuable information.

Dora Mae Anderson Heckman
Go Ye Village
1201 W. 4th Street, #507
Tahlequah, OK 74464

Dear *Flashback* Editor:

I enjoyed reading Johnny Nettleship's letter in the August 1997 *Flashback*, as well as the one which appeared in the February 1977 issue. As much as he tells about his family he very modestly omits telling how he himself broke into headlines in the local newspaper at a very tender age as one of the prize babies in Fayetteville. It reads as follows:

From the *Fayetteville Democrat*, Tuesday, June 3, 1919:

PRIZE BABIES

Four to five year class: John Davis Nettleship, son of Mr, and Mrs. E. L. Nettleship, score 95

Three to four year class: Oliver Carl Carlisle, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Carlisle, Farmington, score 98

Two to three year class: Mildred Louise Osburn, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Osburn, score 98 1/2

One to two year class: Alice Ferguson Jones, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Virgil Jones, score 98 1/2

This was his early beginning of being published in the newspaper.

Alice J. Brock
4107 Santa Maria Street
Coral Cables, FL 33146-1122

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Washington County Historical Society

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